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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002454

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SUBJECT: JULY 23 TUWAITHA COMMITTEE MEETING

REF: STATE 97039

Classified By: ECONOMIC MINISTER CHARLES P. RIES FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C). SUMMARY. On July 23, Energy Attache attended a meeting of the Prime Minister's Tuwaitha issues committee. The committee emphatically expressed the desire to meet with high-level representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to understand all safeguards requirements that must be addressed as part of the sale of Tuwaitha yellow cake. The committee requested USG assistance in obtaining the necessary visas to travel to meet with IAEA representatives and potential purchasers of the yellow cake. The committee also requested a meeting with U.S. Department of Energy scientists who conducted an earlier inventory of the material in order to obtain information that might be useful in consummating a contract of sale. END SUMMARY

12. (C). On July 23, Energy Attache met with the four members of the Prime Minister's Tuwaitha issues committee. The committee complained that, in spite of repeated requests beginning in May for information regarding the safeguards requirements that Iraq must comply with as part of the effort to sell the yellow cake, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has refused to respond. On several occasions during the meeting, the committee emphasized that it was not seeking IAEA's help to sell the material, but only its help in understanding the "legal" requirements that must be met as part of the process of transferring ownership of the material. Ambassador Srood Najib, emphatically stated that he would be asking for a meeting with a "high level" IAEA delegation that would include Director General Mohamed ElBaradei and requested that the USG assist in facilitating this meeting. (Note: Separately, on July 23, EMIN provided letter elements to Prime Minister's Chief of Staff Tariq Abdullah. End Note.)

13. (C). Energy Attache inquired about progress on preparing the letter from the Government of Iraq (GoI) to the USG requesting assistance in selling the yellow cake. (Reftel). Amb. Najib handed copies of the elements to the other members of the committee and stated that some elements were beyond the committee's authority to agree to, but that he would be holding discussions later in the afternoon regarding those elements. He also commented that he did not see a problem with the elements.

14. (S). As for the committee's attempts to locate a purchaser, Amb. Najib stated that he would shortly be sending

letters to the Iraqi delegation in Vienna for distribution to South Korea, France, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States asking that those governments identify potential purchasers for the yellow cake. The committee members expressed the hope that they could meet potential purchasers in Vienna during their trip to meet with the IAEA.

In this regard, the committee requested USG assistance in obtaining the necessary visas, including Schengen visas in order to travel to various locations to meet with potential buyers within the EU over the next 2 to 3 months. Dr. Mousa al-Atia observed that he had wanted to meet with representatives of the Edlow International company last week in London or Paris, but had encountered visa problems. Dr. al-Share' mentioned that he wanted to have his visa for travel to the United States extended. The committee is interested in expediting all actions regarding efforts to meet with the IAEA and travel to Vienna, and is hoping to hear as soon as possible what, if any assistance in this regard the USG is able or willing to provide.

15. (S). We also discussed issues associated with substantial quantities of contaminated ammonium nitrate present at Tuwaitha. Dr. al-Share' stated that the GoI would be sending a letter requesting USG assistance in disposing of the ammonium nitrate. Energy Attache requested that the letter be separate from the letter requesting USG assistance in selling and transporting the yellow cake, since disposal of the ammonium nitrate would be a separate effort. In response to a question posed by Energy Attache regarding disposal or treatment technologies, Dr. al-Atia stated that he was aware of technologies that could be used to separate the uranium from the ammonium nitrate. Specifically, he mentioned a resin column technology. Energy Attache

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requested that committee members examine available technologies and be ready to discuss them at the next meeting. (Note: During a meeting with the Economic Core Group on July 22, Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker requested Energy Attache to assemble an internal Embassy working group to research disposal or treatment pathways for the ammonium nitrate. End Note)
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